

**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT:**

This report pertains to an investigation of the identification of the burial location of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), seconded to the Royal Flying Corps, during the Great War 1914-1921.

**SUBMITTED TO:**

[CWGC Canadian Agency](#)

66 Slater Street

Suite 1707

Ottawa Ontario Canada K1A 0P4

Att: [Dominique Boulais](#)

**Report Date:** 25 March 2016

**Reason for Submission:** ("X" means purpose of the report)

<b>Casualty Identification:</b>		<b>Burial Information:</b>	
Confirmed Identity	X	Burial Location Identified	X
Most Probable Identity		Grave Stone Correction	
Questionable Identity		Grave Records Correction	X
Incorrect Identity		Request for CWGC Details	
Other		Other	

**Supporting Documents:** (# refers to attachment number; "I" information provided)

<b>Casualty Identification:</b>		<b>Burial Information:</b>	
Gray, Linton Valentine	i	Bedford House Cemetery	<a href="#">link</a>
7 Squadron, RFC	i	West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	i
Lieutenant	i	Plot 10 Row E Grave 19	i
Death 16 August 1917	<a href="#">link</a>	Exhumation 15 July 1921	i
Attestation Papers	<a href="#">link</a>	Cemetery Schematic	<a href="#">link</a>
Service Record	<a href="#">link</a>	Graves Registration Report	9
Circumstance of Death	1	Concentration of Grave	10
CEF Canada Register	2	Headstone Register	
Officers Transfer to RFC	3	Casualty Spreadsheet	
RAF Casualty Card	4	Trench Map Exhumation	
Area Map(s)	5	Grave Stone Photograph	
Trench Map(s)	6	Grave Stone Inscription	
Flight Path and Crash Site	7	Memorial Inscription/Photo	
Candidates List	8	Reporting and Review	11

**Summary of Findings:**

The Graves Registration Report form for Plot 4 Row E Grave 19 lists an Unknown Canadian Officer of the Canadian Flying Corps. We know this to be a Canadian that was attached to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), as there was no separate designation.

A review of all applicable records provides clear evidence that the remains are those of Lieutenant Linton Valentine Gray, attached to service with the RFC subsequent to service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

## Details of Findings:

The findings are conclusive that the remains in Plot 10 Row E Grave 19 are those of Lieutenant Linton Gray, a Canadian serving as an Observer with the Royal Flying Corps.

The findings are based on the following:

1. The *Circumstance of Death* (COD) file for Lieutenant Gray tells us that he was initially with the Saskatchewan Regiment (32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion) prior to being attached to the Royal Air Force (Royal Flying Corps prior to amalgamation with the Royal Naval Air Service). He was “*previously reported missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died*” on or since 16 August 1917.
2. The remains of Lt. Gray were not knowingly recovered and buried under his name in a cemetery, as depicted by his *E13 War Graves Register* (WGR) and thus his name was added to the Arras Flying Services Memorial (Attachment #2). His name was not added to the Vimy Memorial, as all Canadians in service of the RAF or predecessors are named on the Arras Flying Services Memorial.
3. The transfer of service of Lt. Gray is confirmed in the *Ledgers of CEF Officers Transferring to the Royal Flying Corps* (Attachment #3). This record shows that Lt. Gray was attached to 7 Squadron on 22 January 1917, was transferred to 27 Squadron for a brief period in June 1917 and returned to 7 Squadron in July 1917. He was reported missing on 16 August 1917 in France.
4. A detailed summary of the fate of Lt. L. V. Gray is provided in the authoritative text “*The Sky Their Battlefield II*” by Trevor Henshaw. On page 110 we find the information specific to this case:

Date of Entry: August 16, 1917

Aircraft Serial Number: A3856

Aircraft Type: RE8 (Royal Aircraft Factory, 2 seater biplane reconnaissance or bomber) – reported as Napier Machine

Unit: 7 Squadron (new RE 8's in July 1917 operating over Ypres as reconnaissance)

\*\*: source of information is a “Casualty Report”

CP: they were on a “Contact Patrol”

End Result: the plane broke up and crashed east of the lines (so assume front line is running north-south)

MIA: Missing in Action

Casualties: Townsend and Gray killed in action

Flight: left at 7:25 a.m. “Allied Time”

Nationality: Lt. Gray is not noted as being Canadian, so it would be assumed he was British

Destination: flight over Langemark to Winnipeg Road

In summary, the document shows that Lt. Gray was on a reconnaissance patrol in an RE 8 two seater Napier built bi-plane in a flight over Langemark, north of Ypres, heading toward the area at Winnipeg Road. His pilot was Lieutenant Townsend. The plane broke up and crashed over the German lines, at which time both Townsend and Gray were killed.

5. The area where the flight originated was north of where the Canadian ground forces were in service in either 1915 or later in 1917. The flight originated in an area designated by Trench Map 20 (Roulers) and ended in the area of Trench Map 28 (Ypres), so unrelated to other Canadian action (Attachment #5). The flight would have taken them on a path heading southeast from Poelcapelle-Langemark.
6. A period trench map for the sector covered by Map 28 illustrates the path of the flight from Langemark, over the German front line in the vicinity of **28.C.5.d.40.45** where the remains were recovered (Attachment #6). This was on a clear and southeast flight path, as reported, from Langemark to Winnipeg Corners to the east-northeast of St. Julien. We can suggest that the flight would have been subject to ground fire from the German trenches in sector 28.5.d.
7. We have used an overlay of the trench map on a modern day Google Earth image of the area to show the area that is overlapped between Map 20 and Map 28 (Attachment #7). It may have been a straight-line flight, or the flight may have diverted slightly to the southwest for recon purposes. The deviation from a straight-line flight to the crash site may also be related to loss of control of the aircraft after being hit. Either way, the plane went down in enemy held territory and the remains would have been recovered by the Germans.
8. The *Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group* (CEFSG) has prepared a detailed spreadsheet that provides information on all Canadian service men with unknown graves, thus on the Arras Flying Services Memorial (Attachment #8 or [online version](#)). This includes all pilots, observers and gunners in the service of the RFC, RNAS or the consolidated RAF throughout the Great War. A copy of this database has been provided to Veterans Affairs Canada and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The spreadsheet clearly demonstrates that only Lt. Linton Valentine Gray can be considered as the Canadian Officer in the Flying Corps that is in the grave at the Bedford House Cemetery. A separate report on the pilot of the flight, Lt. D. W. O Townshend, shows that he was buried in [Harlebeke New British Cemetery](#) after his remains were exhumed from the Hooglede German Cemetery ([COG-BR](#)) in July 1924.
9. The *Graves Registration Report Form* (GRRF) for the Bedford House Cemetery Enclosure No. 4 is clear that the remains in Plot 10 Row E Grave 19 are those of a Canadian Officer of the Flying Corps (Attachment #9). For clarification, there is no such unit as the “*Canadian Flying Corps*” but rather that is a reference to designate Canadians flying in the British “*Royal Flying Corps*”. The “*Royal Air Force*” was the amalgamation of the *Royal Flying Corps* RFC) and the *Royal Naval Air Service* (RNAS).
10. The *Concentration of Graves (Exhumation and Reburials) Burial Return* (COG-BR) shows that the remains of the Canadian Officer were exhumed from location 28.C.5.d.40.45 on or about 15 July 1921, some 3 years earlier than the discovery of the remains of Pilot Lt. Townshend (or as recorded elsewhere as *Townshend*).

The Canadian Observer (Lt. Gray) was explicitly matched to a “Napier Machine” which provides clear and indisputable evidence that it was the RE8 aircraft that crashed at that location where the remains were recovered. Despite our extensive research, we have yet to uncover any reference to the Machine Gun with the Serial #2340.

#### **Action Required:**

The “Investigative Report” has been prepared in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out by the CWGC, should they wish to make any changes to the commemoration details (Attachment #11).

It is our contention that all of the evidence clearly shows that the remains that are buried in Bedford House Cemetery Enclosure No. 4 in Plot 4 Row 10 Grave E are those of RFC Observer, Lieutenant Linton Valentine Gray.

#### **Historical Information:**

The following information is provided for historical reference purposes only and does not form an integral part of this report. It is noted here due to some inconsistencies as to his service in the CEF prior to transfer to the RFC. This analysis resolves any inconsistencies in the records and confirms it is the Lt. Gray in question.

Linton Valentine Gray #411165 was a 23 year old student when he attested to the Canadian Expeditionary Force on April 27, 1915 as a member of the Canadian Army Service Corps (C.A.S.C.). He had 3 months prior service in the Canadian Militia with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Regiment (Seaforth Highlanders of Canada). He was taken on the with a Temporary Commission (Lieutenant) in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (Calgary) on 13 July 1916, prior to transfer to the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Mounted Rifles in October 1916 when transferred to France. In January 1917 he was attached to the Royal Flying Corps for duty as an Observer “on probation” and appointed a “Flying Officer” on 22 January 1917. He was seconded for duty with the RFC on 20 June 1917 and was reported missing on 16 August 1917.

Some records indicate that Linton Gray was taken on strength to the P.P.C.L.I (Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry) in July 1915, was accidentally injured (feet scalded in D.4 Trench at Messines) in the trenches, and after recovery saw service with the C.A.S.C. and then to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Interpretation of the documents suggests that he went to the PPCLI & RCR Depot in the UK and not to the active fighting force of those units in the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.

# ATTACHMENT #1

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
	Lieutenant	GRAY	Linton Valentine
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. RELIGION
Saskatchewan Regiment, attached Royal Air Force.	on or since 16-8-17	602-7-79	Not stated
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY			
"Previously reported missing, now for official purposes presumed to have died."			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
NOTE: Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
		Grave..... Plot..... Row.....	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHEET.			

M. P. W. 2643  
13841-12-19  
H. Q. 1772-30-4658  
I. J. 74343-M and D. 10002

LGS



# ATTACHMENT #2

W2317-56 6000 11/17 HWV(R1817)

Form E. 13.

17203  
18402

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Rank Lieut. Name GRAY. L. V.

Unit Sask. Regt. att. R.A.F. *Sec. Arch Docs* Next-of-Kin \_\_\_\_\_

File No. R.L. \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death	Cause and Place of Death	Cas. Sheet No.
16-8-17.	PREVIOUSLY REPORTED MISSING NOW FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES PRESUMED TO HAVE DIED ON OR SINCE- 16-8-17.	994.

Date of Burial	Place of Burial	Description of Grave

R-A-F MEM.  
ARTAS

# ATTACHMENT #3

Christian Names (in full)		Permanent Home Address		Surname	
Date of Birth				Present Service	
Name of Person to be Informed of Casualties		Name		Relationship	
1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. M. R.		M. R. V. Gray		Wife	
Address		401 South Oak Street		City	
How long known		12-1-15		Registered Paper No.	
12-1-15				25-14-28	
MOVEMENTS (continued)					
Attesting Officer	Unit	Date of Entry	Date of Exit	Special Remarks or Duties	Working Agency Statement
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. M. R.	27-1-17	27-1-17		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. M. R.	27-1-17	27-1-17		
	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. M. R.	27-1-17	27-1-17		
APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS					
Date of Issue	Rank	Description	Grade	Date of Issue	
12-1-17	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.	S.O. (2)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt.	12-1-17	



# ATTACHMENT #4

4273 89220 10,000 10/17 J.P. 6p.143

**CASUALTY CARD.**

Rank, Name and Unit: Gray L. S.  
1st Lt. (Sgt.) at Ft. 5959d

Tests completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Went overseas: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduated as: 1st Lt. on (date) 20.6.17 Employed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Report Received and Official Reference	Date of Casualty	Where occurred	Type of Machine	Nature and Cause of Accident	Result of Accident	Name of other Occupant of Machine	Remarks
26.3.18. 23.3.18. 24.3.18.	18.8.17	France	SE 8A	Wing fire from ground	Wounded	W. D. S. 1st Lt. 5959d	Home news

0229 W1040/282 10,000 6/17 C.A.F. Ltd.

**CASUALTY CARD.**

Rank, Name and Unit: Gray L. S.  
1st Lt. (Sgt.) at Ft. 5959d

Tests completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Went overseas: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduated as: 1st Lt. on (date) 20.6.17 Employed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Report Received and Official Reference	Date of Casualty	Where occurred	Type of Machine	Nature and Cause of Accident	Result of Accident	Name of other Occupant of Machine	Remarks
19.8.17. 16.8.17. 17.8.17.	16.8.17	France	SE 8A	Wing fire from ground	Wounded	W. D. S. 1st Lt. 5959d	Home news

0229 W1040/282 10,000 6/17 C.A.F. Ltd.

**CASUALTY CARD.**

Rank, Name and Unit: Gray L. S.  
1st Lt. (Sgt.) at Ft. 5959d

Tests completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Went overseas: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduated as: 1st Lt. on (date) 20.6.17 Employed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Report Received and Official Reference	Date of Casualty	Where occurred	Type of Machine	Nature and Cause of Accident	Result of Accident	Name of other Occupant of Machine	Remarks
19.8.17. 16.8.17. 17.8.17.	16.8.17	France	SE 8A	Wing fire from ground	Wounded	W. D. S. 1st Lt. 5959d	Home news

0229 W1040/282 10,000 6/17 C.A.F. Ltd.

**CASUALTY CARD.**

Rank, Name and Unit: Gray L. S.  
1st Lt. (Sgt.) at Ft. 5959d

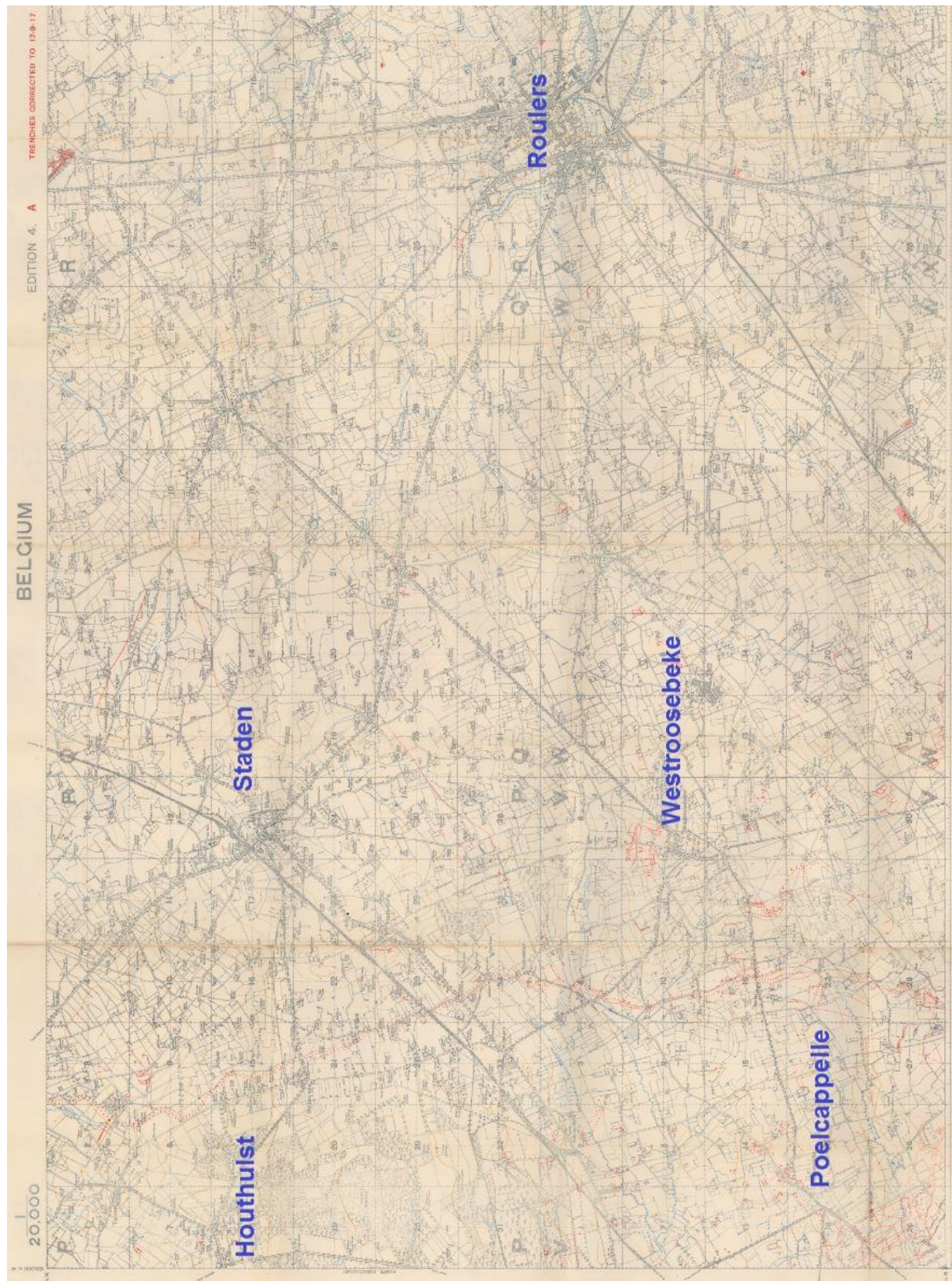
Tests completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Went overseas: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduated as: 1st Lt. on (date) 20.6.17 Employed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Report Received and Official Reference	Date of Casualty	Where occurred	Type of Machine	Nature and Cause of Accident	Result of Accident	Name of other Occupant of Machine	Remarks
19.8.17. 16.8.17. 17.8.17.	16.8.17	France	SE 8A	Wing fire from ground	Wounded	W. D. S. 1st Lt. 5959d	Home news

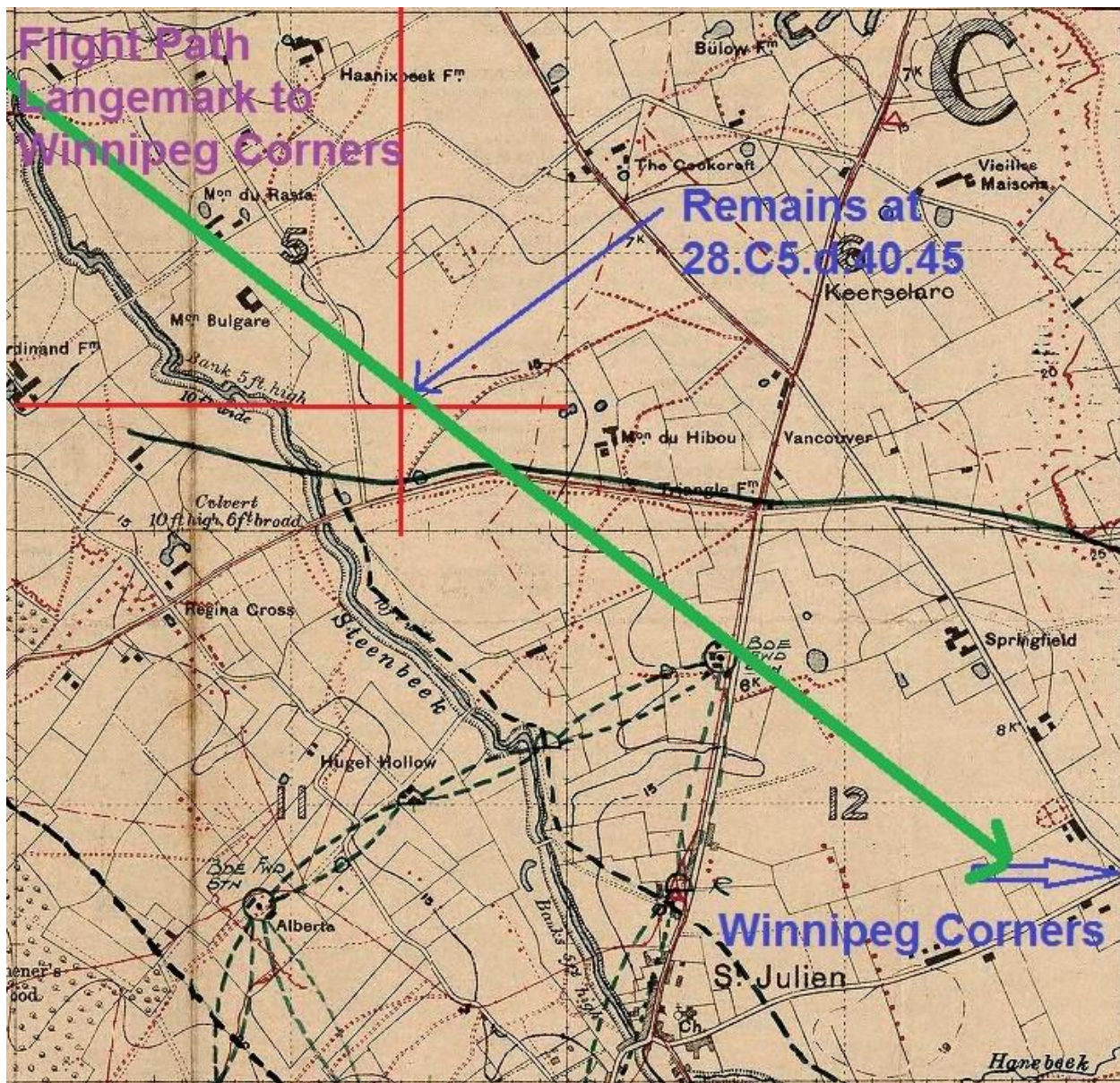


## ATTACHMENT #5





## ATTACHMENT #6





## ATTACHMENT #7



This document is available for download as an [EXCEL SPREADSHEET](#).

Lieutenant L. V. Gray



# ATTACHMENT #9

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT  
GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

Form W3372.

SECTION REPORT No. 65 SCHEDULE No. 128.C.  
*64* *REV.*

No.1.Area I.W.G.C.  
PLACE OF BURIAL BEDFORD HOUSE CEMETERY ENCLOSURE No.4.

Commune:Zillebeke.  
Land belongs to 28.I.26.a.9.6.

The following are buried here:— PLOT.10.ROW"E"Cont.ALL CROSSES ERECTED.

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or Despatched	Map Reference
20th Manchester R.	49526	McKINNON	Pte.J.	1.10.14		6 C
K.R.R.C.		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				7 C
Roy.Engrs.		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				8 C
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				9 C
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				10. C
Y.R. NORFOLK REGT.	40234	LOWDER	PTE. D.	30.11.14	Ref/4311	11 C
"D" Coy.		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER (LOWTER)				
Lancs Fus.		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				12
Norfolk Regt.		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				13
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				14 C
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				15
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				16
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				17
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER (D.C.M.:M.M.)				18
Cdn Flying.Corps.		UNKNOWN CANADIAN OFFICER				19
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER				20
		UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER (MACHINE GNR)				21

(6 31 5) W8219—M901 20,000 10/16 HWV(P237A) Forms/W3372/1  
12:94—M1303 30,000 1/17

*149*  
*15.16*

30

COPY ZILLERKE 64-108E

Certified all crosses erected.

1/9/108E.

CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Re-burials).

BURIAL RETURN.

Name of Cemetery of Re-burial BEDFORD HOUSE CEMETERY ENCLOSURE No.4.

15-7-21

Sheet 28. I.26. a.9.6.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was Cross on Grave?	Regimental particulars.	Means of Identification.	Were any effects forwarded to Base?
Sheet 28							
10	E	15	O.3.b.5.2.	No.	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER	Clothing	No.
"	"	16	O.3.b.5.2.	"	"	"	"
"	"	17	O.3.b.5.2.	"	"	"	"
"	"	18	O.6.a.9.7.	"	"	"	"
"	"	19	C.5.d.40.45.	"	"	"	"
"	"	20	C.12.c.25.30.	"	No 2340 on M.G. (Napier Machine) Canadian Flying Corps.	Medal Ribbons Numeral and Button	"
"	"	21	J.31.a.1.4.	"	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER.	Button	"
"	"	22	O.6.a.3.6.	"	* Machine Gunner Pte. H.G. Wills, 23701	Machine Gun Badge	"
"	"	23	P.1.a.1.9.	"	10th R.W. Tents K/A 31-7-17 UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER (part Remains)	Clothing	EF/X/10503 No.
"	"	24	P.1.a.60.65	"	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER	Numeral	"
"	"	25	O.6.b.4.5.4.	"	Welsh Regt	Clothing	"
"	"	26	I.36.d.75.60.	"	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER	Clothing	"
* Newspaper cutting found on body gives account of winning of military medal by L. Ppl. J.H. McGuinness							
* Liverpool Regiment. Home address: - 28, Auburn Road, Tuebrook.							
						(Sgd)	E.G. Champion Lt.



## **ATTACHMENT #10**

This “*Reporting and Review*” attachment is provided to assist all parties in the submission of an investigative report related to the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) receives a copy of this report in the event they wish to make changes to the commemoration details. In order to alter the records, the CWGC has set out their criteria for the procedure and submission of cases for review, as detailed below. The CWGC is under no obligation to make changes based on a report.

<b>Procedure:</b>	<b>Guideline Criteria for Submission:</b>
All new identification cases need to be assessed in the first instance by the Canadian Agency (CA) and submissions should go to their office directly. After an initial assessment, if the Agency feels that the case is compelling, they will then pass all the documentation to the Commemorations Team at the Commission's Head Office. Head Office will then review the case and inform the CA of their findings. The Canadian authorities will then decide whether or not any changes to the arrangements for commemoration are required and inform the Commission accordingly.	Cases need to present clear and convincing evidence to prove the identity of a casualty and must not be based on assumption or speculation. The Commission's Commemoration Team will also consider whether the findings of a better informed contemporary investigation are being revisited and if there is any new evidence to consider. By way of example, it is unlikely that the Commission would support a revision of the arrangements for the commemoration where it is apparent that no new evidence is being presented and, a better informed previous decision is being revisited some 100 years later.

The following have participated in the preparation, review and submission of this report on a voluntary basis. Those noted below have read the investigative report and compared it to the criteria set out by the CWGC, as a guiding principle, and have agreed to have their name included as part of the review team. The CWGC may contact any of the reviewers at the e-mail address provided below.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Richard Laughton	Private Researcher LMC Great War Research Company	<a href="mailto:rlaughton@laughton.ca">rlaughton@laughton.ca</a>	Report Author
Trevor Henshaw	RFC/RAF Researcher/Author	<a href="mailto:tstb2@outlook.com">tstb2@outlook.com</a>	Investigator & Reviewer
Tim McTague	Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group Review Team	<a href="mailto:timmct@verizon.net">timmct@verizon.net</a>	Reviewer